

Purpose

Journal of the



**Amputees
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Incorporated

July 2021

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EDITORIAL

It has been many years since the Federation held an Amputee Awareness Week. The first such occasion was in 1966 but, due to a lack of enthusiasm, it gradually lapsed over the years. However, it is back this year as a joint venture with the Artificial Limb Service and we're looking forward to making ourselves known in the community.

But is it really the community we should be targetting? Of the 4,000+ amputees in this country, little more than 500 currently belong to our organisation. The number has declined steadily over the years from our "heydays" (if one can call them that) in the 1950s when it was all about petitioning the Government of the day for free artificial limbs - finally achieved in 1964. Maybe in the present day, when we have everything supplied *free gratis*, we need to have something for which to fight to counter apathy and boost our numbers.

Last year the Amputee Society of Taranaki was dissolved and there is currently real concern that the Amputee Society of Top of the South will follow the same path. If we (the Federation and its Societies) want to continue to advocate for the interests of amputees, then we need to halt this decline and re-build our numbers.

This has been a real "hobby horse" of mine over the years and chances are you've heard it all before. However, I strongly believe that the need continues for a strong group to represent the interests of amputees and as the only organisation to do so in NZ that is us! We will continue to represent all amputees, whether or not they are aware of us doing so, in matters of welfare and benefits, in providing support and encouragement, and in promoting independence. And if this helps newcomers to our ranks to take up the challenge and renew their participation in everyday life, then we will have gone some way to fulfilling the reason for which we were established 74 years ago.

If you are not a member and are reading this on our website or have picked up a copy at your Limb Centre, we would love you to get in touch and join your local Society. It's all about Awareness!

Lorraine Peacock

National Coordinator

Search **Amputees New Zealand** on Facebook
and **Like** us (Closed Group also available)



AMPUTEE AWARENESS WEEK 4-11 OCTOBER

We are combining with the Artificial Limb Service to hold an Amputee Awareness Week in October and considering a range of options/activities to promote our cause. Societies will have ribbons and pens to give away and will be promoting the Week in their regions. Members are encouraged to liaise with their local Society and give what assistance they can.

HOLLY LAUNCHES INTO AVATAR ROLE

(Excerpts courtesy of Stuff and the Otago Daily Times)



Dunedin Paralympian Holly Robinson will soon be throwing javelins across mobil phone screens around the world. Holly is set to feature in the first official International Paralympic Committee video game, *The Pegasus Dream Tour*, created by Japanese game developer JP Games. Holly has spent years critiquing herself in her quest for perfection in the field of javelin. Now the 26-year-old will cast another critical eye on her performance when she gets to play the official video game of the Tokyo 2020

Paralympics – in which she features as an avatar. “I think I will be quite critical of myself, but it will be fun and so exciting to see myself in this game, and see my avatar,” Holly said. *Pegasus Dream Tour* places players into a virtual Paralympic Games held in a fantasy, futuristic, inclusive and diverse metropolis known as Pegasus City. Players can equip themselves with prosthetic arms, legs and wheelchairs and train in a number of para-sports including 5-a-side football, athletics and wheelchair basketball. Holly, who was the flag-bearer at the 2016 Rio Games, said the game was an innovative way of getting people interested in the Paralympics. “It is going to be really exciting that people get to experience these paralympic sports in this video game.” With the countdown on to the Tokyo Games, Holly said her training and preparation was “really coming together”. “I’m just looking forward to throwing as far as I can on the day.”

(Photo taken during team presentation at the 2016 Games)

CONFERENCE AND GIVE IT A GO! 2022

We will be making up for having to cancel our last two Conferences by celebrating our 75th Jubilee in Wellington during the weekend 8-10 April 2022. Watch out for details of the programme and registration forms on our website later this year.

Have you seen our two publications?

A New Challenge - Advice for New Amputees and **An Ongoing Challenge**

Both are an interesting read and available from the National Coordinator or your Regional Society

Beatitudes for Friends of Those with a Disability

(Reprinted from An Ongoing Challenge)

- Blessed are you who take time to listen to difficult speech, for you help us to know that if we persevere we can be understood.
- Blessed are you who walk with us in public places and ignore the stares of strangers, for in your companionship we find havens of relaxation.
- Blessed are you who never bid us to “hurry up” and more blessed are you who do not snatch our tasks from our hands to do them for us, for often we need time rather than help.
- Blessed are you who stand beside us as we enter new and untried ventures, for our failures will be outweighed by the times we surprise ourselves and you.
- Blessed are you who ask for our help, for our greatest need is to be needed.
- Blessed are you who help us with graciousness, for often we need the help for which we cannot ask.
- Blessed are you when by all these things you assure us that the thing which makes us individuals is not our peculiar muscles, or our wounded nervous system, or our difficulties in learning, but the God-given self which no infirmity can confine.

Rejoice and be exceedingly glad and know that you give us reassurance that could never be spoken in words.

2021 SOCKET COMPETITION WINNER



Nova Keen (7) of Queenstown was born without a left hand - she has a wrist bone but no fingers. She started riding her strider bike when she was 18 months old and now can't get enough riding. Her Dad Josh created a bike sleeve and she was able to ride a pedal bike unaided two weeks before her 3rd birthday.



The sleeve was developed over the years to make it more comfortable for her little digits so they didn't get squashed at the end of the sleeve.

The Way of the Sea

A sailor met a pirate in a bar and they took turns recounting their adventures at sea. Noting the pirate's peg-leg, hook, and eye patch, the sailor asked "So how did you end up with the peg-leg?" The pirate replied "We was caught in a monster storm off the cape and a giant wave swept me overboard. Just as they was pullin' me out, a school of sharks appeared and one of 'em bit me leg off." "Blimey!" said the sailor. "What about the hook?" "Aahhh..." mused the pirate, "We were boardin' a trader ship, pistols blastin' and swords swingin' this way and that. In the fracas me hand got chopped off." "Blimey" remarked the sailor. "And how came yeby the eye patch?" "A seagull droppin' fell into me eye" answered the pirate. "You lost your eye to a seagull dropping?" the sailor asked incredulously. "Well..." said the pirate, "It was me first day with the hook!"

If you are receiving Purpose in printed form and would like an e-copy emailed to you, please let us know.

GARDENING HINTS - Looking Forward to Spring!

Reprinted from *An Ongoing Challenge*

Gardening is good therapy for everyone, no less the amputee. The following hints may make it a little easier.

Germinating seeds in a warm place inside is easily done in early spring before planting them out. A favourite for a range of herbs and vegetables is a small raised garden just near the back door or any outside door. This can be easily organised in a number of plastic plant pots, which can be raised on boxes, or disused chairs or tables etc. It makes the garden easily accessible and there is no need to stoop down. The very enthusiastic gardener may even consider hydroponics as an alternative way to grow produce. For those amputees with balance and mobility problems care must be taken in planning your garden. Plan gaps and width of rows so plants are accessible and ensure surfaces are not slippery.

There is a good range of practical gardening aids available including:

- Wide-handled grips on tools for people who have difficulty holding onto things
- Ratchet-pruners in various sizes
- Gardening aprons with front pockets to hold what is required or weed bags to gather weeds as you go
- Buckets on wheels to clear away rubbish easily, or specially modified, easy to tip wheelbarrows
- Cushioned kneelers with wide supports to ease standing from kneeling, or plastic cushions
- Walking frames with trays

An optimistic gardener is one who thinks what goes down must come up

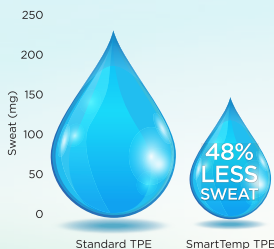
A Gem from our History

I had just been fitted with my new fibreglass limb with quick release straps, and I was striding manfully along one of the main streets in NZ. My shoes had heel-plates and in dodging a passer-by, I slipped. I sat down hard - and my new leg shot 10 ft along the footpath. I sat there stunned, but no more astonished than the people on the street. And more was to come - I hadn't yet learned to put on my new leg without taking off my trousers! (*A Challenge with Purpose - A History of the first 50 Years of the Amputees Federation is available from the Coordinator*)

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INTRODUCING AL VAN ZONNEVELD

(Excerpts from the Hawke's Bay/East Coast newsletter)

Al van Zonneveld developed such a love of the gym that he became a gym-owner himself – so his natural next step was to get qualified in exercise through Skills Active. Al had always been sporty - but his

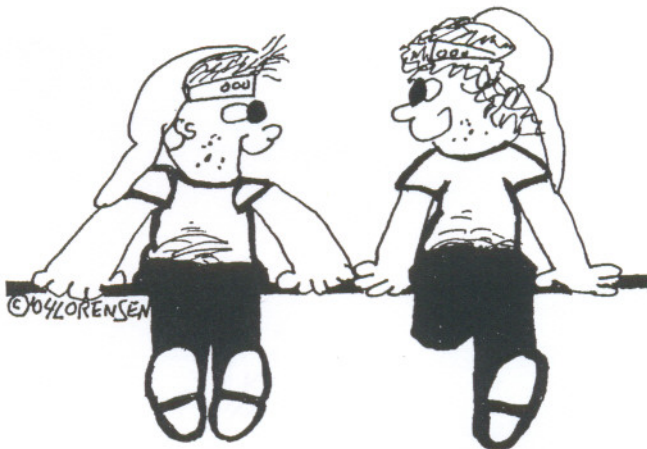


passion for exercise grew after he had his leg amputated in 2014 at the age of 47. He'd had surgery for a club foot in his childhood, and by his 40s his affected leg had developed severe arthritis. His healthcare team suggested getting his foot fused, which he didn't want to do. "But I could no longer do a full day's work, or play a game of football. I went and talked to another footballer in Hamilton who had lost his leg. I saw him, and saw what he was able to do, and after talking to my partner and kids, the decision was made."

After the operation, Al was determined that he was going to be "enabled, rather than disabled". He joined his first gym, Napier's The Beasthouse, and was soon hooked. Al now works full-time at Legacy Gym as the manager, opening the doors at 5.45am and closing up at 7pm. As well as operating group fitness classes and a workout space, Legacy also runs outdoor activities, and takes part in events like the Hawke's Bay Hundy relay run. It offers boxing classes for kids and teens, and is getting into training adult amateur boxers too. Al completed his New Zealand Certificate in Freestyle Group Exercise (Level 4) in 2020. He says it was a bit daunting at first, "going back to school" after many years. "What makes me smile is the diverse range of people that we have coming through the doors at Legacy" Al says. "We've got professionals, solo mums, younger people and older people. "It heartens me especially to see families coming in. The kids see their mums and dads working out, everybody gets off the couch and out of the house. "And members will come in and tell me how they caught up with each other on the weekend. Some of these people didn't know each other before, although they live in the same community. It's awesome to see those new friendships."

*As you slide down the bannister of Life
may the splinters never point the wrong way*

“THAT'S **SO COOL**.....
ONE LEG GROWS SLOWER THAN
THE OTHER FOR YOU HUH?”



NEWS FROM THE REGIONS

Auckland & Northland - Our AGM was postponed as a result of the last Covid lockdown and we were just able to meet quorum numbers when we finally met at the Auckland Limb Centre. Although most of our previous committee have been re-elected there have been changes to committee responsibilities: Katrina Bungard is now President, Steve Inglis Vice President and Kathy Palmer Secretary/Treasurer. Janis remains on the Committee and will continue to visit amputees at Auckland hospitals when needed. Auckland Transport has changed the format for organisations involved with Total Mobility and we have decided that we will no longer do the assessments due to the amount of voluntary work involved. *(Kathy Palmer, Secretary)*

Waikato, Bay of Plenty & Districts - The Committee is to meet in Tauranga in July, followed by lunch at a cafe. Plans are under way for their annual snow trip to Mt Ruapehu; get in touch if you would like to join them. *(Matthew Bryson, President)*

Hawke's Bay/East Coast - A Soup and Sweets Fund-raiser is planned for 18 July in Napier and weekly swim sessions have recommenced. *(Jacqui D'Ath, President)*

Manawatu & Districts - A meeting and lunch took place in Wanganui at the home of Rosemary Blair and the Wanganui group plan to have monthly informal gatherings for coffee or a light luncheon. A mid winter gathering is planned for 18 July at the Waireka Honey Centre in Rongotea for a tour and talk on honey production, followed by lunch at the Woolshed Cafe. *(Eddie Johnston, Secretary)*

Greater Wellington Region - The Committee had a busy month in June - firstly running the popular BBQ at Mitre 10 Mega, Porirua, then a booth at Love Porirua, finishing off with a mid-winter Christmas meal at Speights Ale House at Petone. *(Rob Penhey, Secretary)*

Top of the South - At the time of writing, there's some uncertainty as to the future of this Society; however, every effort will be made to keep it "afloat".

Canterbury & Westland - We had a successful AGM in March, although attendance numbers were lower than usual. We welcomed Janice Frost back to the committee and also new committee member Bob Newby. Our Peer Support volunteers have been busy supporting an array of pre and post operation amputees over recent months. We are hosting another Quiz function night at the Cranford Ale House at the end of August after having to cancel last year due to the pandemic and we hope to see good numbers in attendance. *(Mark Bruce, President)*

Otago & Southland - A small number of members attended our AGM at the Equinox Restaurant in February when all committee members were re-elected. Our good wishes go to Holly Robinson and Anna Grimaldi who, all going well, will be competing in the Paralympics in Japan in September. *(Lorraine Peacock, Coordinator)*

Newsletters of Regional Societies are available on the Federation's website (www.amputee.co.nz) along with other useful information.

WOULD YOU CONSIDER US IN YOUR WILL?

The Amputees Federation of NZ relies solely on grants and donations for day-to-day operating expenses, including the support of Regional Societies.

We would be very grateful if you would consider making a bequest to us in your Will or you can include a bequest in an existing Will by adding a Codicil (Your Solicitor/Trustee can advise you regarding this). We would appreciate your support.

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